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Poems.



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P O E M S

BY

WILLIAM WHITMAN BAILEY

PROVIDENCE

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1909

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P R E F A C E

IN this foreword I desire to express my sincere and cordial gratitude to those good friends who have countenanced my endeavor. Without their suggestion, approval, and aid, I should never have undertaken to issue my poems. As it is, I have excluded more than half the material in hand, using my best judgment as to what should be retained.

The poems naturally group themselves as I have arranged them; a plan which I think will commend itself to possible readers; thus, any one interested in Nature or in Childhood will see at once just where to look for these subjects. As my friends represent many diverse lines of occupation and thought, it seemed only fair, as far as it was possible, to meet these divergencies. The essays cover about forty years.

I especially desire to pronounce here my very deep appreciation of the earnest, arduous, and faithful aid given by Mr. Joseph LeRoy Harrison of the Providence Athenæum. He was the first to urge upon me the publication and has done all in his power to accomplish its success. To Mr. Howard W. Preston, my publisher, I am also greatly indebted for professional advice and oversight, before and while the book was passing through the press. With much doubt and hesitation, I submit the little volume to the public.

W. WHITMAN BAILEY

PROVIDENCE

November 1, 1909

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By transfer
The White House
March 3rd, 1913

P O E M S
O F
N A T U R E

L I V E R W O R T S

THEY are laughing in the meadow,
They are smiling in the dell ;
Upon the woody hilltops
The blue-eyed beauties dwell ;
And unto those who love them,
A pleasant tale they tell.

They speak of sunny weather,
Of birds and babbling brooks ;
Of walks within the forest,
And rest within its nooks ;
And many a dreamy fancy
Recorded not in books.

In sweetest maiden beauty
They mischievously peep,
And laugh at later flowers
Unwakened from their sleep,
While tenderly they guard them
And loving vigils keep.

Mid fallen leaves and withered
Some blush along the way,
While others fleck the meadows,
Or by the fountains stray,
In white or blue habiliments
To greet the April day.

At frolic seem they ever ;
Now hiding from my sight,
And then together clustering,
As if in half affright,
Yet conscious of their holiday
And happy in the light.

None other coming flowers
To me are dear as they,
Of those that bloom in April,
Or in the genial May.
I would that thus to comfort me
They evermore would stay.

For tales of vanished childhood
To me they sweetly sing,
And to my fading memory
They recollections bring
Of home and loving faces,
A precious offering.

Unpluck'd I leave them growing
Full thick about my feet,
I cannot call them town-ward
From out their fair retreat ;
No refuge has the city
For anything so sweet.

The story that they tell to me
Of pleasure and content ;
Of hope and trusting confidence,
However faith is bent ;
This lesson I can bear away ;
To teach it were they sent.

C A L Y P S O

(A rare orchid of the North)

CALYPSO, goddess of an olden time,
(I learn it not from any Grecian rhyme,
And yet the story I can vouch is true),
Beneath a pine-tree lost her dainty shoe.

No workmanship of mortal can compare
With what's exhibited in beauty there,
And looking at the treasure 'neath the tree,
The goddess's self I almost hope to see.

The tints of purple and the texture fine ;
The curves of beauty shown in every line ;
With fringes exquisite of golden hue,
Perfect the wonders of the fairy shoe.

The goddess surely must have been in haste,
Like Daphne fleeing when Apollo chased,
And losing here her slipper by the way,
Intends to find it on another day.

And will she come to seek it here, or no?
The day is lengthening but I cannot go
Until I see her bring the absent mate
Of this rare beauty, though the time is late.

I watch, but still no classic form I see;
Nought but the slipper 'neath the forest tree,
And so, for fear of some purloining elf,
The precious relic I secure myself!

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT

WITHIN his pulpit, striped with green and red,
Jack, the itinerant, lifts his shaven head ;
Absorbed he stands in quiet thought a time,
But as the bell-worts ring the Sunday chime,
I mark him closely, and he seems to say
To all the plants about him, " Let us pray ! "

His voice is low, and yet I seem to hear
His supplication and his words of cheer ;
His sermons and his songs of joyous praise,
In thanks to Heaven for its wondrous ways,
And when I seek my homeward path, I know
He gives his benediction as I go.

He softly whispers as I turn away —
" I make you welcome to my church to-day.
In olden times I often spoke to men,
And they would listen with indulgence then,
But now, there 's scarcely more than one a year,
Who comes to worship in my temple here.

“ Though I can preach with faith uplifted higher
Within the hearing of my forest choir
The voice of tree-toads, and the warbler’s trill,
The leaves’ faint murmur and the whispering rill,
Than I could do within the city there,
With all the approbation of the fair.

“ My raiment is uncouth, my pulpit queer,
But no one heeds them in the wild-wood here.
The squirrels listen, and the dusty bee
Pauses from labor, and attends to me.
His joyous course the butterfly delays ;
The wood-thrush pauses in his song of praise.”

Eccentric preacher, you shall have your will,
And I’ll be constant in attendance still,
If you’ll allow me here my mossy seat,
On other Sundays when your hearers meet.
So, Jack, your reverence, take my kind adieu,
My best of wishes shall abide with you !

THE BLOODROOT

A TENDER plantlet, often seen
In springtime, up the dark ravine,
The bloodroot, with its star of glory
Recalls old Vergil's tragic story,
For, lo! the roots begin to bleed
If one but touch the charming weed,
And listening, we expect once more,
The plaintive wail of Polydore.
So white, so pure, so fair to see,
Alas! can sin have tempted thee?
What horrid story can'st thou tell
Concerning this romantic dell?
Thy error must indeed be great
To cause this pitiable fate.
Cannot the blessed dew or rain
Wipe out the much-offending stain?
Unhappy blossom, when shall rest
The sorrow that disturbs thy breast?

A N E M O N E

AWAKE, Anemone ! Awake again !
The sunshine sparkles on the dropping rain,
The sky is azure, and the storm is o'er ;
Awake, Anemone ! Awake once more !

Awake, Anemone ! Awake from sleep !
Thy sister beauties from the mosses peep ;
The tasseled alders dust me o'er with gold,
Awake, Anemone ! thy day is old !

Awake, Anemone ! Dost slumber still ?
I hear the music of the lapsing rill,
I see the willow's silky tips appear ;
Awake, Anemone ! the spring is here !

Awake, Anemone ! Why sleepest yet ?
Thy tinted sepals with the dew are wet ;
A tear-drop lingers on thy trembling leaf ;
Awake, Anemone ! thy time is brief !

Awake, Anemone! in beauty rise!
Reveal thy wonders to my longing eyes;
For thee, my darling, I expectant wait;
Awake, Anemone! ere yet too late!

H O U S T O N I A

H O U S T O N I A, the delicate,
Among us soon will be ;
Her lilac cross exhibiting
For worshippers to see,
Who stroll into the meadows,
Perhaps like you and me.

The blossoms gather socially,
As is the custom, when
We meet upon the corners,
In groups of nine or ten,
To gossip of the weather
Or of our fellow-men.

A few, who seem the speakers,
Their heads aloft uprear,
While others bending over,
The listeners appear.
O, would that we could chronicle
The news they seem to hear !

Alas ! we cannot understand
Their words of weal or woe,
Their pleasant stories of the field
And how they daily grow.
The work that is allotted them
We mortals cannot know.

THISTLE-DOWN

THISTLE-DOWN, Thistle-down, whither away !
Can you not linger for one little day ?
Wait till to-morrow, my Thistle-down, do !
And if I am ready, I'll fly away, too !

We'll have such a journey as never was seen ;
Now o'er the billows, and then o'er the green ;
Now in the meadow, and then on the hill,
Flying and floating, and flitting at will !

And some little cloud we'll together pursue,
That seems to be losing itself in the blue ;
The dragon-fly chase as he skims o'er the lake ;
The emigrant birds from the North overtake.

We'll learn where the rainbow begins, and its gold
That is buried thereunder, together behold ;
Now, does n't this tempt you, my Thistle-down, bright,
To pause for a day from your wandering flight ?

Will nothing delay you? Has Nature a need
Entrusted alone to your gossamer seed?
Then, hasten away to your dance in the wind;
And leave me all lonely and longing behind!

THE FIRST ANEMONE

HIDDEN under bushes, shrinking from the light,
Lo! a meek anemone, hiding from my sight,
April's darling treasure, in the lap of May,
Shivering in the breezes of the vernal day.

Where have you been tarrying, blossom of my heart?
Coy girl Anemone, blushing here apart?
In a dew-drop mirror have you sought to look?
Did you dip your fingers in the laughing brook?

Do not tell me, lassie, you have been asleep;
Dreaming of the summer, in the mosses deep!
I could then have found you, blooming there alone,
Caught you, and claimed you, for my very own.

Bashful Anemone! I shall hold you fast,
May has now resigned you to my care at last,
Never to leave you in the wind and wet;
Never to forsake you, never to forget!

A L A D Y ' S - S L I P P E R

PERHAPS Titania, wandering by the way,
Espied this slipper in her path one day,
A yellow sandal, striped with bands of red,
And stitched with many a mystic golden thread.

She doffed her satin wonder of a shoe—
Beyond the beauties that we mortals knew,
And left it here, by elfin wishes blessed,
A peerless sandal that a queen has pressed.

Or is this slipper gleaming in the grass,
Fair Cinderella's tiny shoe of glass?
May be the Prince, who never can forget
His lovely partner, seeks its fellow yet.

Or did some Indian Princess, in the chase,
Leave here a relic of her dusky race?
A beaded buskin, set with gems and gold,
A prize indeed, for any sachem bold!

I think no mortal can attain the gifts
This wondrous treasure from the ground to lift,
The tale may yet be told by fairy pen,
We leave its mystery unrevealed till then.

THREE PULPITS

THREE painted pulpits, close to the ground,
Three little preachers looking around,
Each pretty violet lifting her head,
Eager to learn what each of them said.

Butterfly sextons the lily-bells ring,
The wee congregation together to bring,
One dainty blossom, in haste to her pew,
Lost her silk slipper, O what shall she do?

The Trillium nods to the sermon asleep;
Perhaps he has drunk of the painted cup, deep,
And if a collection is now taken up,
In lieu of the coin is gold butter-cup.

Through birch and beech windows the sunny day shines,
The organ is sounded by fair columbines,
The birds are the choir, the clerk is a bee,
I hope when he rises, he'll fail to see me.

Bumble-beedle, they call him, the daring profane,
He chides the plant Olivers, asking again,
And if he doth catch me in seeking for "more,"
I'll seem to be sleeping and utter a snore.

Three little preachers are silent to men,
But if we don't hear them and heed them, what then?
Their own congregation is surely much better,
To do their whole duty in spirit and letter.

BLUE CURLS

THE tint of the sky
Has been given to you ;
In your sweet little eye
And your bonnet of blue,
In the shade of your gown,
In your dress, in your hair,
In your gems, in your crown,
There is blue everywhere.

Was Blue-Beard your father,
My pretty Blue Curls ?
They say he was rather
Too partial to girls ;
What charm of his daughter
Induced him to spare
From general slaughter
Thy maidenhood fair ?

Did he love your poor mother,
The dearest and best,
Who for some whim or other
He sent to her rest ?

Did he dote on your tresses,
The hue of his beard ?
Did he seek your caresses,
Or was he afeared ?

However he ended,
In sorrow or glee,
No sin has descended
From him upon thee ;
No crimsoning stain
Of his scimitar wild
Shall ever remain
On his innocent child.

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT, A FRIAR

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT,
 The Reverend Jack,
 On the church of his fathers
 Now turneth his back ;
 A penitent hermit,
 With limited needs,
 He counts with devotion,
 His rosary beads.

No longer in garments
 Of green and of black,
 A simpler attire
 Sufficeth for Jack ;
 And even his pulpit,
 That once was his pride,
 For humbler surroundings
 He now puts aside.

I did not suppose
 That my Methodist John
 The robes of a friar
 Would ever put on ;

With bell and with candle
Would celebrate mass,
Or hear a confession,
Alas ! John, alas !

These new-fangled notions
O, Jack, will not do
For such simple bodies
As look up to you ;
But they will forgive you
If you will remain ;
Then come to the arms
Of your people again.

I think you in Spring-time
Will surely return
To your orthodox habits,
For which you must yearn,
And when the Anemones
Look in your eyes
For comfort and hope,
You'll repent and be wise.

EPIGÆA ASLEEP

ARBUTUS lies beneath the snows,
While winter waits her brief repose,
And says, "No fairer flower grows!"

Of sunny April days she dreams,
Of robins' notes and murmuring streams,
And smiling in her sleep she seems.

She thinks her rosy buds expand
Beneath the touch of childhood's hand,
And beauty breathes throughout the land.

The arching alders bending o'er
The silent river's sandy shore,
Their golden tresses trim once more.

The pussy-willows in their play
Their varnished caps have flung away,
And hung their furs on every spray.

The toads their cheery music chant,
The squirrel seeks his summer haunt,
And life revives in every plant.

“I must awake! I hear the bee!
The butterfly I long to see!
The buds are bursting on the tree!”

Ah! blossom, thou art dreaming, dear,
The wild winds howl about thee here,
The dirges of the dying year!

Thy gentle eyes with tears are wet;
In sweeter sleep these pains forget;
Thy merry morning comes not yet!

THE GOLDEN NEST

AT Colchis once, in days of old,
Brave Jason sought the fleece of gold,
And wandering through the woodland green
Beheld afar its shimmering sheen.

The tiny birds who watched the sight,
Were filled with emulous delight,
And in their songs, from sire to son,
Recounted how the deed was done.

At length a precious prize they found ;
A maiden's golden hair unbound,
And with its filmy fibres spread
The curtains of their nuptial bed.

To them the lustrous lock was deemed
The place of which the poets dreamed,
While she, of priceless gift bereft,
Has never known the cunning theft.

Yet travelers, sauntering in the glade,
Astonished, view the cradle swayed
By murmurous winds, which ne'er reveal
The secret which the birds conceal.

P S Y C H E

TO MRS. SARAH HELEN WHITMAN

(To the Greeks Psyche was a butterfly and was also
the Soul)

I SPOKE last evening to a doubting lady,
Of the moth Luna, of its size and beauty ;
"Find me this wonder in some woodland shady,"
She said ; and I went forth unto my duty.

Yet had her light behest passed from me wholly
When sauntering townward through a forest way,
I saw upon a shrub that blossomed lowly,
The lovely Luna in her green array.

Like some sweet soul but newly passed the portal,
Her early chrysalis she had disdained,
And with the impulse of a thing immortal,
She strove to use the wings she had attained.

But maybe newborn spirits lack the power
Of flight, at once, within that better sphere,
Nor can they free themselves within the hour,
From things that bind them to existence here.

“ ’Tis Psyche ! ’tis the Soul ! ” I said, “ Eureka ! ”
“ It is a spirit from the shadowy land ;
That doubting lady, I’ll arise and seek her,
That she may be convinced and understand.”

I went ; she saw, and at it marvelled duly,
Nor wonders now at my triumphant praise ;
She frankly owns that I had spoken truly,
And God is great in his mysterious ways.

JACK SLEEPS IN THE PULPIT

OUR quaint little preacher
 Is hidden away,
 Asleep 'neath the leaves
 Till the sunshiny May
 Awakes all the flowers
 To frolic and play

Though he is sleeping,
 His sermons will take,
 Unhidden, a form
 In his dream till he wake ;
 Be silent in falling then
 Each downy flake !

So long as the flowers
 Are such giddy things ;
 While the fell dragon flies
 Flutter on wings,
 A reason for preaching
 Each vernal time brings.

The parish is large,
The duties are great ;
The priest must be active
Both early and late,
And save all the erring
From whatever fate.

THE LAST LEAF

I'VE bathed in April showers ;
I've welcomed summer flowers ;
I've blushed in autumn sun,
To think what I have done.

Now my days are o'er,
I'll never whisper more
My story in the breeze
To all the listening trees.

Now I gladly go,
Friends are lying low,
Ah ! the time is brief
For mortal and for leaf.

I end my trembling quest —
I've gained the promised rest —
At peace with all to die,
Thou sad old world, goodbye !

TWO CROWNS IMPERIAL

TWO crowns imperial for me!
To part with either I am loth,
And yet I think you will agree,
I surely cannot wear them both.

Were I Germania's Kaiser boy,
I might perhaps the thing contrive,
The dual baubles to enjoy,
And make my double kingdom thrive.

But as a child of Yankee birth,
These coronets of fatal gleam
Excite my democratic mirth,
But not ambition's vaulting dream.

I'll keep them for the giver's sake,
Apart upon my curio shelf,
No tyrant hand the crowns shall take,
Ere that, I'll wear them both myself!

THE PAINTED CUP

THE fairy king in wrath one day,
His mystic chalice flung away,
For, though with nectar half filled up,
He scorned to touch the painted cup.

Yet, if by brooks I pause to drink,
His beaker stands upon the brink.
And in the crystal far below
I see it's evanescent glow.

It lures me through the marshy ground
It's scarlet splendor all around,
And I could wish the cruel fay
Would take his sinful cup away.

Forever, now, with wine deep dyed,
I see it by the river side,
Betraying by its tempting gleam
All such as wander by the stream.

No fay comes seeking through the sedge,
Perhaps the king has signed the pledge,
For reddened by its brilliant stains,
Untasted still the cup remains.

I N N O C E N T S

YE bright little Innocents,
Gathered in play,
Have you been sleeping
This many a day?
Hid you your faces
So gentle and shy
When fiercely the tempest
Was hurrying by?

Did you wear your blue bonnets
When under the sleet?
Alas! had you nothing
To cover your feet?
Did you cluster together
To keep out the cold?
Did any rash blossom
Her petals unfold?

Have you seen Epigæa
When taking her nap?
Or fair Pussy-willow
In ermine and cap?

Has Alder her tresses
Combed out in the breeze?
Have pretty young maple buds
Blushed from the trees?

I see you all whispering
And nodding together
As other folks do
In this glorious weather;
But what you are saying
I really can't tell,
So, beautiful blossoms,
I bid you farewell!

S P R I N G

THE toads in the marshes
Are tuning their throats,
The robins are chanting
Their merriest notes ;
The alders are combing
Their tresses of gold,
And bees in their rambles
Are busy and bold.

The pussy-cat willows
Are downy and soft,
The maple is swinging
Its censers aloft ;
The first dandelion
Has burst into bloom,
And breezes are full of
The richest perfume.

The pretty Mayflower
Has waked from her nap,
The innocence smiles
From her violet cap,

The liverwort gazes
In girlish surprise,
With a look both of shame
And of fear in her eyes.

The Saxifrage hastens
Fair April to greet,
The Blood-root looks down
On her suffering feet,
The yellow Five-fingers
Are gemming the green,
And Violets lovingly
Blooming between.

The Columbines ringing
Their musical knells,
To winter are flinging
Their happy farewells ;
For spring with its sunshine
And beauty is here,
And everything welcomes
The opening year.

THE EVENING PRIMROSE

I STOOD in awe before a simple flower,
Expanding silently at evening hour,
And watched to see each petal fair unfold
To form, at length, a perfect cross of gold.

I merely whispered, "It is sacred ground;
The Holy Grail I now, at length, have found!
No longer need I weary in the quest,
My search is o'er; behold the perfect rest!

TO THE MAYFLOWER

BENEATH protecting leaves,
Secure from prying thieves,
Fair Epigæa's face
Reveals its maiden grace.

When cruel winter goes,
And sunshine melts the snows,
She lifts her gentle head,
And peeps from out her bed.

Half coy, and half slighting,
Her glance is all inviting,
She does not seek to hide,
Nor dares she yet confide.

Sweet blossom, do not fear,
I'll leave thee growing here ;
I love thee far too well,
Thy whispered thought to tell.

Live safe beside the way,
The spot I'll ne'er betray,
But, though I fail to speak,
Thy home I'll often seek.

THE CLOSED GENTIAN

FAIR Gentian, come, thy secret to me tell,
What dost thou hide within thy azure cell?
What sacred treasure keep from human view
Beyond the curtains of thy blossom blue?

Are thy sweet eyes forever closed in sleep?
Cannot thy lover take one little peep?
Or dost thou grant alone unto the bee
To thus commune in silent thought with thee?

Some say, thou art Pandora's box of old,
That all the troubles of the world did hold;
I wonder now if underneath thy cope,
Remains, as then, one fond and lingering hope,

The scarlet cardinal in his pomp and pride,
His priestly terrors long in vain has tried;
He cannot wrest confession of a sin,
Or hope thy trembling, gentle soul to win.

I think a sorrow, not a sin, concealed,
Thou wilt at last to tender pleading yield,
And he will hear who learns thy secret then,
A tale of love unknown to other men.

OCTOBER

THE leaves are falling one by one,
The clematis has nearly spun
Her feathery cap, and golden ferns
Are seen where'er the woodsman turns.

'Tis pleasant now "in good greenwood,"
Where, like some errant Robin Hood,
We wander walking all day long,
Or wake the forest glades with song.

Upon the stream in silence floats
The leafy fleet of fairy boats,
And far above, in azure sky,
The clouds, like ships, go sailing by ;

The asters, with the golden-rod,
Beside the pathways smile and nod,
And gentian's eye of tenderest blue
Laughs through its fringed lids at you.

Soon all these beauties will have fled,
Each tinted leaflet will be dead,
And where the summer roses grow,
In gathering drifts will lie the snow.

E P I G Æ A

(Sent to Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman in reply
to her "Arbutus," sent to me, 1875)

IT is not always that one meets
A true wood-lover on the streets,
Nor often that there haps along,
One full of fairy dream-land's song,
To whom belong of right the things
A wanderer from the forest brings.

Arbutus, loving and loved much,
Transfigured grows beneath her touch,
And leads us through the golden haze,
By piney woods, and willowy ways,
Or where the alder's tresses beam
In dazzling light above the stream.

It is a pleasure to bestow
These buds suffused with alpine-glow,
On one who has the subtle power
To grace with verse each modest flower,
For surely all the flowers belong
Of right unto the Queen of Song !

MY RICHES

I DO not care what others seek,
Of diamonds or of gold,
When I such wealth can e'er bespeak,
All mine, that I behold;
They buy their yachts and sail the sea —
What place in all their games for me?
They see strange lands; well, do not I,
And such as they can never spy?
From heights serene
Where dwells my queen,
My lovely daffodilly —
Where tulips grow
And jonquils blow —
I think their doings silly.
I have coupons as well as they;
I cut them in the month of May,
While what they have will meet an end —
I reap perpetual dividend!

THE LIVERWORT

BLUE-EYED blossom, somewhere sleeping,
While the winter clouds are heaping,
Dream you now of sunny hills,
Of mossy, fern-engirdled rills?

How I long to see expand
The velvet fingers of thy hand;
To catch thy smile, so full of glee,
And play at hide-and-seek with thee!

For thou wert with me when a child,
I wandered in the woodlands wild,
And peopled every glade with things
Too marvelous for manhood's springs.

And still, however changes came
To me, thou hast remained the same,—
The simple, pure, delicious joy,
I knew thee when I was a boy.

A P R I L

THE bluebirds sing
“It is spring! It is spring!”
The robin chants
In his old-time haunts,
And from the deeps
Of the swamp there “peeps”
The cheery note
Of the hyla’s throat;
Afar on the breeze,
From the maple trees,
Merrily come and go the bees;
And here and there a butterfly
Essays his new-formed wings to try;
A spider on his giddy thread
Climbs to the mizzen-topmast head
Of some wrecked weed,
Stranded by autumn in its need;
The windflower, bashful in its grace,
Seeks to conceal its pretty face;
The “Quaker ladies” meet together
To talk of suffrage or the weather;

Over the earth the genial glow
Of spring-time bids the blossoms blow,
And birches droop their golden hair
Above my pathway everywhere.
No wonder that the bluebirds sing
Or Hyla cheers us with his voice —
A thousand buds proclaim the spring,
And bid us to “Rejoice! Rejoice!”

M Y W E A L T H

I SEEK not the gold that shines
In the depth of western mines ;
The sugar-maples hold
In their hands a purer gold.
In coin I wade knee-deep,
All mine, if I care to keep,
And a shower of ducats fall
At my very lightest call.
Who says that the wealth I own
Is surpassed by a glittering stone?
He feels not the mellow glow
Of these trembling leaves, I know,
Nor can he by wildest guess,
Conceive what I possess.

M A P L E S

LIKE Grecian hero of the ancient days,
I silent stand in wonder and amaze
Within October's dreamy veil of haze.

While round me leaves are falling everywhere,
With gentle motion through the ambient air,
Their gold seems sifted into something rare.

The far-famed garden of Hesperides
Showed nothing fairer to brave Hercules
Than yonder golden glory of the trees.

Nor yet would Jason and his comrades bold
Have sought in Colchis for the fleece of gold
Had they but known the prize our maples hold !

W I L L O W A N D A L D E R

SEE, pretty Pussy-willow
In ermine mantle clad,
Is strolling by the river,
To make the alders glad,
For all her yellow tresses
In sunlight gleam with gold ;
The breezes gently toss them
In many a wondrous fold,
These are my vernal darlings —
This ever-wedded pair ;
My lad with silky raiment,
This lass with golden hair.

A S H E L L

I FOUND a fairy boat upon the shore,
One little seat it had, and nothing more ;
What boundless ocean had it wandered o'er ?

The venturous boatman, where, indeed, was he,
Who launched this shallop on the billowy sea,
And left it stranded on the beach for me !

Did he with promise fair and hope set sail,
To seek his fortune with the favoring gale ?
And did he reach the land, or did he fail ?

He leaves no record of his viking quest ;
His deeds of prowess are but faintly guessed,
And ocean murmurs of his peaceful rest.

A T U L I P

BRIGHT, golden chalice, opening to the sun,
Thou art the prize my winter work hath won ;
I well could bear the sleet and cold and rain
To see thy pure and gladsome face again ;
To note thy sepals, day by day, unfold,
And sun myself in thy transcendent gold !
To watch the bee, that maple-blooms invite,
Pause at thy shrine ere yet he takes his flight.
My Holy Grail thou art, and I shall be
Better and purer for the sight of thee.

A FAIRY BOAT

LONG ago a little fairy
Built himself a tiny boat,
Fashioned from a cup of acorn,
And he set it then afloat.

Spider's-web composed the rigging,
Masts were made of grasses tall ;
Spiders, they are active sailors ;
Rarely do they have a fall !

Wings of moths he made his sails of,
Glittering with a myriad hues,
When he asked a fairy maiden
" Would she sail ? " Could she refuse ?

And so, a tricksy spirit lassie
Stepped upon his shallop light ;
I saw them start, but in a moment
Groom and bride were out of sight.

Often, when in woodlands pausing
By some cool and shaded spring,
The fairy ship on billows tossing
Passes me, all wondering.

Then I hear, too, elfin laughter,
Tinkling music, as from bells,
Little hands are surely waving,
Perhaps to me, their gay farewells.

M Y S H E L L

A PRETTY spiral stairway
Leads up into my shell,
I would that I could follow
A story it might tell.

Perhaps up yonder staircase,
Whose pearly steep I see,
There is an attic chamber,
All hung with filigree.

Maybe there sits the maiden
Who sings that solemn song,
That deep within the chamber —
Is echoed all day long !

She is a weary lassie —
Despite her house of pearl,
Will not someone release her,
This long imprisoned girl ?

MY VIOLETS

THEY tumble over the border,
I cannot keep them in :
They revel in disorder,
They laugh and freedom win.

Defiant of endeavor
To keep them from the grass,
They smile on me forever,
Each blue-eyed, wayward lass.

I've tried to check the riot,
Alas ! it is in vain ;
They never will keep quiet,
But run away again.

I love them all the better,
And now the truth is told,
Than if, by silken fetter
I could each blossom hold.

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT

I FOUND a camp-meeting of teachers,
Most wonderful ever was seen ;
Such quaint and prim little preachers,
In pulpit of purple and green.

I knew not the words they were saying ;
The sermon did not understand,
But saw all the flowers a-praying,
And hid my own face in my hand.

M A R C H

WHEN the tassels of the alders
Begin again to swing,
When robins from the tree-tops
Their morning carol sing,
I hear the blackbirds chatter,
I know what is the matter,
'Tis the advent of the Spring.

Then the "pussies" on the willows
Protrude their silky caps ;
The hylas chant their joyous song,
Awakened from their naps ;
A snow pile yonder lingers,
But spring with gentle fingers
Will cause it soon to lapse.

Now look for epigæa
Along the forest way,
Or liverworts in frolic mood,
That bloom for us to-day ;

By many a rocky splinter
They triumph over winter,
And laugh in merry play.

And, lo ! a shining crocus,
A cup of burnished gold,
Within our very garden
The Holy Grail behold !
No more we are despairing
Since March has grown as daring
As those brave knights of old.

JACK FROST

A BUSY, bright spirit is Mr. Jack Frost,
And a mischievous elf withal ;
He bridges the river with ice across,
He spans the waterfall.

He builds him a palace of crystal fair,
Which jewels and gems adorn,
Brighter than those we frame of air
In waking dreams of morn.

With opals the spider's net he weaves,
Like veil of fairy queen,
He scatters his stars o'er fallen leaves,
Which glitter in icy sheen.

Each moss is a spearman, dight in mail,
Who stands at his post erect,
Some minim seeker of Holy Grail
From Arthur's court direct.

And Jack will touch the window-pane
And o'er the field of glass,
Behold we see brave dons of Spain,
And noble ladies pass.

With crayon bold a fern he draws
So delicate in its grace,
It seems a film of airy gauze
Or woven web of lace.

P O E M S
O F
S E N T I M E N T

R E V E I L L E

MORN o'er the mountain
Now begins to peep ;
Glistens on the fountain ;
Soldier wake from sleep,
Rouse thee to thy duty,
Seize thy ready gun,
Dream no more of beauty,
Fighting's now the fun !

Hurry up ! oh, hurry up ! for dress don't care ; for
dress don't care !
The enemy is lively ; he will not scare !
Hurry up ! oh, hurry up ! the day is clear ; the day is
clear !
Hasten to the roll-call ; haste and answer, " Here ! "

Dawn on the billows
Now begins to gleam ;
Rouse thee from thy pillows,
Wake thee from thy dream ;

Hear the muskets rattle,
See the bayonets shine,
Hie thee to the battle,
Danger's place be thine !

A L A D Y O F C R E M O N A

O H, could I but contrive to win
One chord of yonder violin,
That lassie with her flowing hair
Contrives to touch with feeling rare,
I'd hold it till the wire was thin,
Nor care for all men thought, a pin.

She touches it with such a grace,
Such winsome beauty's in her face,
That I could gaze for hours alone
Entranced like Orpheus' block of stone,
Nor ever dream of other peace,
Until her perfect music cease.

Does she perchance, her influence know,
When melodies like these will flow
To lull the weary heart to rest,
Or wake the angel in my breast?
Will she be merciful to me?
I cannot long such sorrow dree!

R E G R E T

FOR the river I long, athirst,
Like one in a desert land,
Who looks over miles accursed
With a wearying waste of sand.

The mirage reveals a rill,
A cooling inland lake ;
I will arise and fill ;
My anguished yearning slake.

I go to the promised spot
By beckoning palm trees led,
The river — I find it not ;
The sea itself is dead.

TO CORINNE AS LITTLE BUTTERCUP

WHERE dost thou gain the art
That thus has touched my heart
Thou wondrous mite ?
Where all the mimic graces,
The airs and the grimaces,
Which so delight ?

A "Buttercup" art thou —
The only one, I vow,
I've ever seen ;
Though many of the name
My homage seek to claim,
Thou art the queen !

Don't "mix those children up,"
Lest my repleted cup
Shall bubble o'er ;
And do not, for my sake,
That youthful captain take
Forever more !

The years with sorrow laden,
Deal gently with thee, maiden,
 I pray they will !
Nor hasten to grow up,
Sweet little Buttercup,
 Be little still !

M Y S H I P

MY ship is on the sea,
I long for her alway,
She comes not home to me,
O, whither does she stray ?

I meet with sailor men
Who roam the billowy deep,
But none of them do hear
What doth my vessel keep.

They've seen her in the calm,
But shadowy and afar ;
Where rise the isles of palm,
Where gleams the southern star

I know she bears me gold,
If only I could win,
When shall I her behold —
And hail her coming in ?

T H A N K S G I V I N G

THANKS for the crimson apples ;
Thanks for the golden grain ;
For summer's pleasant sunshine ;
For April's genial rain !
Give thanks for all the flowers
That God in beauty sends,
But most of all show gratitude
For kind and generous friends.

What matter if the forest tree
No longer wears the leaf ?
Our kindly mother Nature
But tries our unbelief ;
And she herself in thankfulness
Now seeks a brief repose,
And smiles upon us lovingly
From out her robe of snows.

Thanks for the Nation's liberty,
Thanks for our wealth's increase,
For faith, for hope, for charity,
And, most of all, for peace !

Blow winds, our glad thanksgiving,
Ye ocean billows roar,
And swell the hymn of gratitude
To God forever more!

OLD SANTY AT HOME

OLD Santy lives in a cave of ice,
Adorned with many a strange device ;
For where the Catskill mountains high
Uprear their summits to the sky,
With frosty pinnacle and tower,
He dwells within a secret bower.

'Tis here he makes the wondrous toys
To please the hearts of girls and boys,
Here dolls and hoops, and candies, too,
With balls and books exposed to view,
And Christmas-trees all cut to size
Delight the marvelling stranger's eyes.

A thousand lamps of crystal gleam —
One sees as in a fairy dream ;
For ne'er could chandelier of glass —
These frosty ones in hue surpass ;
Nor could a human mirror show
These changing colors of the bow.

Here curious dwarfs, with skilful hand,
At workshop tables seem to stand,
While one, the leader of them all,
With folded arms surveys the hall,
And in a little note-book takes
A record of what each one makes.

No married man is Santy, he
Delights to work for you and me ;
And when the summer days are hot
He toils within his mountain grot ;
For well he knows the children may
Expect him on next Christmas day.

When at length the time comes round
There's nearly always something found,
But few who give a Christmas gift
Have toiled o'er mountain, rock and drift,
To see where Santy makes the things
Which every year he kindly brings.

CHRISTMAS EVE

IS yon the little star that shone
O'er Bethlehem's field of old,
To guide the wise men of the East
To him who was fore-told?
It shines as bright
This wintry night
As centuries ago
It hailed the coming of the light
And end of human woe.

It twinkles high above the cross
That tops the minster spire;
It hears the chiming of the bells
And music of the choir.
This star we view
In heaven's blue
Shall light us on the way
And be to us a promise true
Of God's unending sway.

I hear the organ's glorious hymn
And children's voices sweet
Uniting with the seraphim
"All Glory!" to repeat.
The day is nigh;
Fair is the sky
And lovely is the dawn,
No more shall man be doomed to die
For lo! the Christ is born!

THE CHRIST-CHILD

BESIDE the Christmas tree
Lies an infant fair to see,
As the twilight of the dawning
Steals in on Christmas morning.

Just as the masters paint
The halo of a saint,
In sacred missals olden,
He wears a glory golden.

The German legends say
The Christ-child comes to-day,
And to the children brings
Great store of precious things.

But most of all he cheers
The orphan child in tears,
And bears from God above
Sweet messages of love.

O this is surely He
Whom thus I seem to see,
For from the unknown shore
A hope returns once more.

NEW YEAR ' S E V E

TOLL the bell, the year is going,
While without the winds are blowing,
And the tempest fiercer growing,
With its rain and sleet and snowing,
Ring out the parting knell!
To the good old year, farewell!
Of the new no man is knowing.

Chime the bells, the glad New Year
With its joy and smiles, is near ;
With its comfort and its cheer,
And hope for every fear,
O let the merry chime
Give welcome to the time,
The happy day is here !

NEW YEAR ' S E V E

THE year is dying —
It ' s hours flying ;
And, as they go,
The falling snow
In drifts is lying.

Our watch we keep
While others sleep,
To hear the bell
That tolls farewell
To feelings deep.

Forget the past,
Now fading fast !
It ' s pleasures gone
Why should we moan ?
They could not last.

The new-born year
Behold is here !
There ' s work to do
For me and you,
Be of good cheer !

P O E M S
O F
C H I L D H O O D

A STORY OF PETER MINORIE

PETER MINORIE
In his little dory,
Decked in all his glory
Went a row to take
When, as he was sailing,
He leaned upon the railing,
And from sudden failing,
Fell into the lake.

Alas! for little Peter!
Nothing could be sweeter,
No costume newer, neater,
Than that he wore to-day;
But now 'tis wet and clinging,
As homeward they are bringing
The boy who went out singing,
Upon the beauteous bay.

Yes, true! 'twas very silly
To pluck the water-lily,
He 'd have it willy-nilly,
So now he comes to grief;

And every little fellow
On shore began to bellow,
And Towser (he is yellow);
 Swims out to his relief.

No dog was ever better
 (They say he is a setter),
For though he now was wetter
 Than ever known before;
He brought his little master,
Now sinking faster, faster,
And white as alabaster,
 Unto the nearest shore.

No need of further weeping,
Our Peters' merely sleeping
And there is Towser peeping
 To see him well bestowed,
When next he goes out rowing,
He'll surely be more knowing,
Than seek a flower growing
 In such a wet abode.

M E G

SWEET dreams possess my winsome lass,
Fair Cinderella's pumpkin couch
By her is plainly seen, alas !
When fatal hours of change approach.

She sees her leave the merry dance,
And haste the marble steps adown,
But grieves not at the cruel chance,
Foreseeing still the royal crown.

Invisible, with Percinet
She can the step-dames' plans derange ;
The gnomes within the wood have met,
Nor deems a transformation strange.

She can discern a beauteous land
Where sugar trees grow broad and wide ;
Where candy pebbles form the sand,
And chocolates are on every side.

For her 'tis nothing to descend
With fair Undine beneath the sea;
Ah! water maiden, please to send
My precious lassie back to me.

A BIRTHDAY POEM

IT was the brightest morning
That I had ever seen,
For something whispered to me
That Rosie was sixteen ;
I thought that lovely blossoms,
Like those I often meet
In summer, by the pathway,
Should bloom about her feet.

Will not some kindly fairy
Go pluck me a bouquet,
From proud Titania's gardens,
Which I can send to-day ?
Come, bring me budding roses,
A *Rose*, you know, is she
Who claims this loyal homage,
A tribute gift from me.

The spirits tell me sadly
That not a blossom grows
Within the forest gardens
To match my city Rose.

I fear that in their envy
My little bud they 'll bear
Unto their leafy bowers,
To plant in beauty there.

Depart, ye frisky minims,
I've nothing more to do
With any thieving houris,
Or spirits like to you !
You shall not have my blossom
However much you moan ;
She is not meant for Oberon,
And she is mine alone !

T O M E G

I HEAR a patter at the door,
A tap of tender fingers,
And footsteps on the entry floor,
Where Meg, my darling, lingers.

She 's come to tell of dolly's wrongs,
And how her grief she hushes,
To father every care belongs,—
Into my arms she rushes.

I kiss and comfort as I may ;
My word her grief assuages ;
Sweet trifles cause her to delay—
For only six her age is.

She is the lady of my heart,
I swear allegiance truly ;
From her I never can depart,
Or near her prove unruly.

M Y B O Y

HIS mind conceives vast schemes to span
The nursery floor with railroad plan ;
He sails brave ships, in childish play,
To Ceylon's Isle and fair Cathay ;
No land remote or unconfessed
Lies hidden from his viking quest ;
No castle tower can e'er withstand
His tin-clad soldier's fierce command ;
His knights in tourney never fail,
His prince must win the Holy Grail ;
Beforehand it is understood
He 'll wake the princess in the wood,
And all the giants' heads will fall
Before his sounding bugle call ;
He notes the sound of Ariel's flute,
When all the ambient air is mute ;
Each flower reveals its perfect grace,
And fairies meet him face to face.

MEG'S HAND

WITHIN this narrow space,
 You see we can embrace
 Our dainty Margaret's hand ;
The love that she conveys
In winsome baby ways
 You can hardly understand.

Be sure she sends with this
An imperishable kiss
 To Auntie, ever dear !
And dimples o'er with fun
To see what she has done
 With little fingers here.

COLLEGE

VERSE

ON THE OLD CHAIR

(In the First Baptist Meeting House : a Ballad
a la Dobson)

ANCIENT, mellow and brown,
Flat-bottomed, level and grand ;
Here flows the dignified gown,
Here all the candidates stand —
Tell me, now, is it not grand?
Maidens in beauty are there,
Think of them, men, if you will,—
This is the President's Chair !

Think of the crowds it has seen
Pass as the doorways unfold,
Gather to talk on the green,—
Ah ! we are all growing old,
Most of our story is told ;
None with the boys can compare,
Boys whom we once knew at Brown,—
This is the President's Chair !

No graduates longer salute,
Nor, tearful, express a farewell,—
Philosophy fails to confute
Errors that science must tell.
All has been changed by a spell,
Latin itself does not dare
Utter itself as we knew,—
This is the President's Chair!

E N V O Y

If we its record could scan,
Whom would our scrutiny spare?
Each President was but a man,—
This is the President's *Chair*!

Read before the
Class of 1864, Brown University, June 29, 1870

'TIS six years since we met,
Still I do not forget
How very jolly
We all were on that night,
And how we put to flight
Old Melancholy.

Yet I have seen odd times,
Of strange and divers climes
The distant shore,
But everywhere I roam
My heart still claims its home
In Sixty-Four.

Upon Nevada's hills,
Near California's rills
And snowy mountains,
Among Arcadia's pines,
Columbia's florid vines,
And tropic fountains,

Still have I thought of Brown ;
And, as I gazed adown
 The lengthening years,
Have stopped to breathe a sigh
For the old days gone by,—
 Their smiles and tears.

Few were the troubles known
In those fair hours now flown
 For us, old boys ;
We paused not then to think
Of what we needs must drink
 Beside our joys.

Yet few have seen a morrow
That has not brought some sorrow
 To dash their bliss,—
But though there's much of pain,
The joy comes back again
 In spite of this.

For here we are to-night,
With smiles and laughter bright,
 To greet our baby ;
To give the silver cup
With happiness filled up,
 And promise, maybe.

Long live our first-born child,
I hope "he'll draw it mild"
From this fair beaker;
That he will truth inherit,
And learn to be of merit
An earnest seeker.

Let every joy rain down
Upon this son of Brown
That is to be;
And may we see him own
A pair of pants full blown
In Seventy-Three!

Grant that he meet a lass,
First daughter of the Class,
In future days,
And do his level best
To keep her neatly dressed
And trim, always.

So, when we end the day,
And look back, far away,
To this dim shore,
'Twill please us in the knowing
That boys and girls are growing
For Sixty-Four.

TO CLASS OF 1864

COME, ye who have wandered from Providence
town,
Come back to the knees of your dear Mother Brown;
Her hands are extended in blessing to-day
Over all her alumni, the grave and the gay;
No child of her bosom should linger away.

Though melons that erewhile our festival graced,
The change in commencement forbids us to taste,
We yet have the turkey, the berries, ice cream,
And temperance liquids in bountiful stream,—
And some there are smoking — or is it a dream?

Here come the old boys of the Class Seventeen;
Great Powers, how many there are in between!
Are these all remaining — this elderly twain?
There's many a classmate that never again
Will help them to build up their Castles in Spain!

And here are the fledglings of young Eighty-Two,
Refreshingly tickled to think they are "through."

Ah ! me, when they meet in the world's busy strife,
To struggle for honor or, maybe, a wife,
With yearning they 'll think of the old college life.

No troubles perplexed them in those happy years,
Not even their lessons gave permanent fears ;
And long may they live, in their ignorance blessed,
Oblivious to sorrow, to care, and unrest,—
But no ! I am doubtful if this is the best.

True sorrow ennobles ; there 's balm with the pain ;
The sunshine is brightest just after the rain ;
Whatever their fate then, we hope and believe,
That whether they glory or whether they grieve,
They ne'er will forget the Old Mother they leave.

Nor shall *we* forget her in Old Sixty-Four,
At every triennial we count up a score,
And if there is virtue in song and in noise,
I am rather suspicious that we are the boys
Who 'll take college honors — by making a noise !

Poem read at the thirtieth reunion of Class of 1864,
June, 1894

ARE these the old boys of the Class Sixty-Four?
Our seventy fellows reduced to a score?
Why, look at their heads silvered over with gray,
And all of 'em walk in a rheumatic way;
They talk of their wives and their children, forsooth,
In a way that no longer betokens their youth;
They wheeze as they speak of the tricks they once knew,
Ere early mustaches and side-tabs they grew;
They are all reminiscent, a sign of old age,
And love to look over the previous page;
Their girth in some cases is wondrous to see,
For just look at Kenyon and then gaze at me.
Extremes thus will meet in the very best class;
I wish that some fellow that pitcher would pass;
“Dry up, you old fool!” I hear one remark,
And lucky for him that he sits in the dark.
The Class is not old, its standing is straight,
It takes off its lemon and seltzer first-rate;
Among the whole crowd there is not a gray hair,
On never a brow is the wrinkle of care;

Their wives all adore them for virtuous men,
You call them asthmatic and aged, what then ?
Why, just hear them sing, you'll not have a choice
But just to award them the prize of the voice.
There's Ham, the sweet singer, and Willard and Rhodes,
Whom e'en the gods envy in happy abodes ;
Was ever such trio in other class seen ?
And then, for good stories, I'll back up our Dean.
'Tis all precious nonsense to say we are old,
A classical myth such as poets are told ;
We have, on the contrary, sipped of the cup
Filled with vital elixir and drained it all up ;
Its currents electric now course in our veins,
And have some effect on our middle-aged brains ;
At least, for to-night, we are every one boys,
Just stop that old croaker, why makes he a noise ?
Come, fill up the cup to the Class Sixty-Four,
And ring out our anthems and chorus once more,
Aye, wreath the fair beaker, and then "drink it down,"
I give you a toast, boys, "Our Class and Old Brown !"

TO THE CLASS OF 1864

OLD TIME, who neither rests nor slumbers,
Whose ruthless hand no man can stay,
Has dealt full kindly with our numbers,
Yet tinged our locks with silver gray.

We miss and mourn those passed out yonder ;
In silence toast their memory dear,
Which every season renders fonder,
Methinks they gather with us here.

But let no tears bedew this meeting —
The great time of our jubilee,
Let every classmate give his greeting,
And speak in words of praise and glee.

We hail again each loyal brother,
Fill high your glasses as of yore,
We 'll toast again our " Dear Old Mother,"
The pride of Brown, Old Sixty-Four.

Read at the dinner of the Brown Alumni at Delmonico's, New York, March 25, 1892

I LOOK all around me to see whom I know,
First up at the dais, then down at the row.
I'll own that I find me but ill at my ease
Among all these fellows with triple degrees.

I gaze down the ranks with a sense of surprise,
To catch the one answering gleam of their eyes.
Please am I Van Winkle? Will not some one shake
My anatomy gently — or *am* I awake?

Are these the old boys I knew in my youth?
Pray tell me if all they have said is the truth?
If Harry, and Tommy, and Dick, and the rest,
Are sitting down yonder all fully confessed?

It must be a dream; I left them but now,
Yet silver is trailing o'er many a brow,
And crow-feet meander in wavering line
O'er faces familiar in days of Lang Syne.

Yes! these *are* the boys; I perceive it is true,—
The very same fellows I yesterday knew.
The proof? I have heard them this eve “drink it down”
In just the old words, to our dear Mother Brown!

POEMS
OF
PSI UPSILON

PSI Upsilon

HAIL to thee! Hail to thee! fair Psi Upsilon!
Sweet are the mem'ries now leading to thee!
No fair laughing maiden that ever I smile on
Is dear to my heart as thy symbols to me.

The clasped hands of friendship, the diamond's token,
Conceal a sweet secret betrayed to the few;
The letters depicted remain still unspoken,
A wealth they convey to each Brother Psi U.

For though on the mountain or wide-rolling ocean,
In desert or prairie we wander unknown,
These letters we welcome with deepest emotion,
And claim him who bears them indeed as our own.

In sickness or sorrow, or when the eyes brighten,
Our dearest Old Mother is kind to caress;
The weariest woe she has power to lighten;
Our slightest achievement is prone to confess.

Then hail to Psi Upsilon ! Guard her forever !

 We're true to her watchword in shadow or shine ;
Be this our proud duty, our utmost endeavor,
 To wear yet unsullied that diamond of thine.

THE SHIP PSI U

I SIT down by my door,
And gaze upon the shore
Where waves are breaking —
And billows o'er the sand
Come bounding hand in hand,
Wild music making.

I look upon the sea,
And nothing seems to me
Now intervening,
Except a distant craft
Which gentle breezes waft,
Onward careening.

It is the ship "Psi U,"
Borne o'er the waters blue,
With streamers flying ;
And hark ! the echoing song —
"To her we all belong"—
Now rising, dying.

The crimson on her sails,
Now deepens and now pales,
 All in the gloaming ;
Waves redden with the light
Save where they break in white,
 Or sparkle foaming.

Who are the gallant crew
Of our staunch ship Psi U ?
 Where is she sailing ?
An answer is borne back,
Far o'er the foamy track,
 To our loud hailing,—

We are the Sigma men,
In numbers six and ten,
 Of passing beauty ;
We're striving for the goal
Which waits each faithful soul
 Who does his duty.

Go then, brave ship, and bear
That legend everywhere,
 And Psi U's Glory,—
Till all the world around
Hears the triumphant sound,
 And tells her story.

A RAINY NIGHT IN PSI U

Written in 1872, but read at banquet of Psi U Convention held with the Eta of Lehigh,
May, 1888

THE rains may fall and tempests roar,
And rage or wail without,
They cannot shake old Sigma's door,
Nor quell our joyous shout.
What care we, boys, for wind or weather,
When singing here our songs together?

Then, brothers, chant some stirring song
To "Georgia and the Sea,"
No matter if the words *are* wrong,
In thought we all agree.
To Psi U's praise we shout each time,
Who hesitates at paltry rhyme?

No pain shall dim our heart's delight,
We'll sing while we are able,
It is enough for us to-night
To gather round the table,
To-morrow's grief may dash our joys,—
Hurrah! to-night we're only boys!

Address to the Lambda Chapter, Columbia College,
N. Y., 1872

I COME from little Sigma,
In a lovely little town,
Which all of us are proud to claim
Who graduate at Brown.
And wandering in this city here
I'm known without my pin,
And rescued by the Lambda boys,
Who kindly take me in.

I hope that when you visit Brown,
As all of you must do,
Some Friday night you'll find your way
Upstairs to Old Psi U.
The road is straight and narrow,
As that which sinners meet,
Who strive to reach the promised land
With faint and weary feet.

But with Sigmatic guiding
You'll reach the wished-for goal,

And find a feast of reason there,
And maybe flow of soul.
Whatever else you there may find,
I'm sure that you will meet
A brother's welcome true and kind,
And honest words to greet.

Then sing the praise of Lambda !
The Sigma sings it, too,
And let us not forget the while
To drink to Old Psi U.
Within each goblet brimming
Her glory bubbles up ;
O, let us catch it ere it goes,
And drain each joyous cup !

Lines read before the New York Association of Psi
Upsilon Alumni at Hotel Brunswick, Feb. 16,
1886, by Edmund Clarence Stedman
for the author

A QUARTER of a century
I've worn the diamond pin,
Its apices are quite obtuse,
Its margins growing thin;
But on its ebon surface
The mystic letters shine,
And golden hands are interlaced
As in the Auld Lang Syne.

Where is the lodge, that jolly den
We used to occupy;
Can Psi U's ever emigrate,
Can our immortals die?
Can such as those we knew in truth
Be grizzled white or gray,
Or in their everlasting youth
Do they come here to-day?

I surely felt an ache just then,
 (Synovial membranes dry);
My handkerchief — there 's something wet,
 (Ah! tear ducts of the eye!)
A wheeze asthmatic from the throat,
 (Bronchitis or catarrh);
Old age is creeping on apace,
 These signs and symptoms are.

One item of anatomy
 Is fresh and hopeful yet,
The heart that beats for Old Psi U,
 And never can forget.
Fill up your glasses to the brim,
 Be sure they're running o'er,
All health and honor to Psi U,
 Both now and evermore!

THE CHAPTER HOUSE

(Lines read at the Alumni Dinner of the Sigma of Psi Upsilon, in Blackstone Hall, Providence, June 14, 1887, Merrick Lyon, LL.D, presiding, Charles J. Arms, Beta 63, toastmaster. The matter before the meeting was to raise funds for building a Chapter House)

HAD I Aladdins' power,
The magic of a ring,
To pour a glittering shower,
A fairy palace bring,
To touch a circlet golden,
A precious lamp to scratch,
Perhaps I might embolden
Some millionaire to match.

The spirits of the ether,
The gnomes within the earth,
Though I am hard on neither,
Reply to me in mirth ;

“Go to! thou dreaming poet,
No Midas touch is thine ;
The lamp, we will not show it,—
Nor that bonanza mine.”

Then I address Pandora,
That hoyden of the box,
A safe deposit surer than
Policies or stocks.
“O Hope release, fair lady,
My brother’s faith endue,
Though I am something shady,
My notes I will renew.”

For here I do proclaim it,
That when my ship comes in,
My wealth, who e’er shall name it,
However vast the tin,
A slice shall go to Sigma
To lay her corner-stone,
And solve “this here” enigma,
Though I subscribe alone!

For Alumni Meeting, Sigma of Psi Upsilon,
February, 1887

WHEN a man counts his years as a maple its rings,
When only a wrinkle each added year brings,
When his locks hyacinthine are silvered with gray,
His eyes and complexion show senile decay,
'Tis pretty hard lines to expect him each time
He partakes of a supper to fall into rhyme.

But when the old boys gather here round the board,
With Sigma's rare dainties so bounteously stored,
A churl would he be, when the fellows desire,
If he failed at one effort to tune up his lyre.
Let his voice be melodious as yonder wild drake,
With tremolo, quaver, demi-quaver and quake,
Let him stroke the wrong strings, and the notes all abuse,
Who cares when his critics are jolly Psi U's?
'Tis the sentiment only the Sigma demands,
The loyal devotion of interlocked hands.

I give you then "Sigma," the queen of the feast,
Psi Upsilon's darling, the pride of the East,
The choicest link in our mystical chain.

Lift high all your glasses ! We 'll toast her again !
Once more fill your goblets, let each brother clink ;
'Tis the Sigma, dear brothers, we 're going to drink !
Tip the crystal inverted and catch its rare dew,
No drop shall be lost in our praise of Psi U !

N E A R , Y E T F A R

“**B**RIEF let me be !” Yet how be brief
When memory tells a thousand stories,
And turns the now historic leaf
Where all can read Old Sigma’s glories ?

“*Pars fui*,” so the poet sings,
Recalling old familiar places ;
The witty words, the jovial things,
But, best of all, beloved faces.

Ah ! Boys, my wraith, like Banquo’s ghost,
Is seated calmy at your table,
“ The board is full !” Not quite, *almost* ;
My shadow’s here amidst the Babel.

Be sure that when the toast goes round,
And halls reëcho with your thunder,
A stately figure will astound
You all, with timely words of wonder !

Read at the
Initiation of the Sigma of Psi Upsilon, 1889

THOUGH Sigma has attained the span
When reproductive function ceases,
Her offspring — please the records scan —
Each autumn season still increases.

Five little boys, or sometimes ten,
Each lad of most engaging feature,
We yearly lead within our den —
And owe to this amazing creature !

No mother can her record beat,
E'en though she strive to reach it, maybe ;
If Sigma 's not a trump, *I'll* treat,—
Yes, “stand it round” for every baby.

Sweet innocents, just hear them sing,
Their harmony would equal Haydn,
And put to shame the siren's song,—
Or Lorelei, that Rhenish maiden !

It glads my very heart of hearts,
When I come here each new September,
To think of all the lively "starts"
And jolly times that I remember!

I doff the staid professor's frown,
I e'en forget my classroom stories,
To hear the fellows "drink it down,"
And chant our dear old Sigma's glories.

I fill my cup with ruby wine;
I bow to every loyal Brother;
Old Sigma! she is mine, and thine;
God bless her then, our Dear Old Mother!

SONG TO PSI UPSILON

(To the tune of Keller's American Hymn, 1890)

SONS of Psi Upsilon, goodly and tall,—
Bring ye the treasures of life to her feet,
Welcome, thrice welcome, to one and to all !
Psi U is smiling her children to greet,
Youthful and aged she hastens to greet,
Honored and blest be her well-storied hall,
Year after year when her faithful sons meet,
Answer again to her glad trumpet call.

Sing loud to Psi Upsilon, paeans now raise,
Join the glad hymn to our mother serene,
Lift all your voices in old fashioned ways,
Bow ye, in homage, once more to our queen ;
Bring ye the tribute of love to our queen,
Songs of the cherished and happy old days,
Memories that ruthless Old Time, the unseen,
Spares us, we 'll chant in Psi Upsilon's praise.

A T P S I U I N I T I A T I O N

October, 1890

BY the door of the Chapter
A little boy sat,
There he was patiently waiting,
Full deeply he pondered
What could they be "at"?
Why did they not open the grating?
"I hear through the windows
The echo of glee,
I wonder what mischief
They've invented for me;
I wish I had courage
My sorrow to dree,—
How long will they keep me awaiting?"

He heard in the Chapter
Exuberant din,
The sound of a billy-goat bleating,—
The blood in his ventricles
Grew very thin,
His heart it was rapidly beating.

“ I wish they would hasten
To put me right through,
I long to be with them
In jolly Psi U ;
Can all they have told me
Be actually true ?
Oh, dear ! But this temperature’s heating ! ”

They came for that Freshman,
The innocent boy,
Just now on the point of despairing ;
They took him up tenderly,
Not to annoy —
Four Sophomores stalwart, up-bearing,
They changed all his anguish
To jubilant joy,
They fondled and petted him
Just to employ,—
They gave him the latest
Patented toy,
While still in the dark he was waiting.

Who is there can tell
What that innocent saw,
By mystical candles depicted ;

Perhaps 't was Jack Horner,
Or Marjorie Daw,
Or Blue-Beard so deeply afflicted.
He went to his chamber
That Walpurgis night,
And dreamed there strange visions
Perhaps of delight,
But ever thereafter,
If stories are right,
His legends all sorely conflicted.

Read at the Initiation of the Sigma of Psi Upsilon,
1891

THE Emperor of China awoke from his slumber,
And gazed from his window, astonished to see
A palace whose turrets arose without number,
Where yesterday stood but a pile of *débris*.

Aladdin had done it ; we all know the story —
By rubbing the wonderful lamp in his hand,
And causing a genie to cover with glory
The simplest of freshmen. Say, isn't it grand ?

Oh ! could we contrive but his art to discover,
The architect's secret, the lamp, ring and all,
We'd rush with the eagerness due to a lover,
And build for our Sigma the long promised hall.

We've polished our argand with fruitless endeavor,
No palace arises to gladden our sight ;
We've twisted our ring ; the Afrite will never
Arise to our summons at morning or night.

Confound his old lamps, his rings and his plunder,
Some stocks in a railroad, or coupons will do.
A-bàs to all weeping and wailing! By thunder!
This project is ours. Hurrah for Psi U!

Read at

Alumni Meeting, Sigma of Psi U, April, 1892

IN silence the temple of Solomon rose,
In silence the hall of the Sigma grows,
The architect even there 's nobody knows.

We've dreamed of the lodge-room for many a year,
For months we have stifled each lingering fear,
Now the rare time of fruition is here.

I beg you examine each intricate plan,
Yes, grumble! pick flaws in them all if you can,
For Sigma, believe me, will have the best man.

No shanty of shoddy will suit us at all,
We want the best thing for Psi Upsilon's hall,
No second-class building, or anything *small*.

The "very best families" need the best place
In which to exhibit an ancestral grace;
You *sabe*! I see then; the Sigma needs *space*.

Don't cramp her or squeeze her, or I do suspect
She'll ruin the plans of the best architect;
Behold them here, Brothers! I beg you inspect!

Poem read at
The Sod-Raising of the New Sigma Chapter House,
Providence, June 20, 1892

THE sultan to Aladdin said one day,
 "Bring me a palace of proportions grand!"
Oh, sire! To hear is but to obey,
 I go to excute your dread command!"

He then betook him to his house awhile,
 He rubbed his lamp and precious little ring,
Then told the genius with a pleasing smile,
 A first-class palace instantly to bring.

So when, next day, the sultan ope'd his eyes,
 He saw a castle standing at his gate,
This filled his majesty with much surprise
 And put to flight perplexities of state.

He called the Vizier, "Abou, look and see!
 Did ever men such wondrous sight behold?
The very minarets are fair to see,
 The windows gleam with jewelry and gold.

“Your eldest son whom you commended much,
Too boldly sought our daughter for a bride;
Can *he* command a palace at a touch?
Go, call Aladdin to the royal side!”

The peasant came; the king received him well,
The princess smiled, as Psi U ladies can,
Then whispered, “Darling, please now won’t you tell
Just who contrived this interesting plan?”

The Sigma, too, has spirits to compel,
Who strive to execute each slight behest;
They take a longer time, but that is well,
A firm-built mansion is, by far, the best.

And so for twenty years, or something more,
Our slaves have worked upon this little scheme,
Revolved each problem o’er again and o’er,
And now, behold! fulfillment of the dream.

Boys, brothers, friends, of Old Psi U,
And ladies bright who wear the diamond pin,
We bid you welcome to an opening view,
And later hope that we may ask you *in*.

Read at
The Opening of the New Chapter House of the
Sigma of Psi Upsilon, April 14, 1893

O HAD I, in my Freshman days,
Once dreamed of such a vision splendid,
That e'er my mediæval gaze
Should rest on this fair pile suspended ;

I would have thought my sober sense
Had suddenly her throne forsaken,
That, for society's defense,
I should to some retreat be taken.

I dreamed, of course, what boy does not ?
But in sweet, regulated fancies
My Pegasus would sometimes trot,
But now, in age, behold, he prances.

I cannot longer hold him in,
For Sigma leads him by the bridle ;
With spurs she prods his glossy skin,
And will not let him once be idle.

I fear to-night, from what I see,
The Hippogriff is sure to stumble ;
He feels, you know, so full of glee,
His giddy master he may tumble.

Who, in these incoherent lines,
Endeavors thus to show his pleasure,
And here his simple chaplet twines
In lieu of more enduring treasure.

Ah, me ! Despite of all I do,
Within this fair and goodly palace,
I cannot think of Old Psi U
And keep the tears from out my chalice.

The memories of that older den
So long familiar in our story,
And all the hosts of famous men
I've known in days of former glory,

Will dim my sight, but not for long,
My voice is not attuned to sorrow ;
Come, let us have one stirring song,
Though care should claim the coming morrow.

I toast " The Boys," both young and old,
I rank myself with those of twenty,—

I hope the Sigma's hands will hold
Certificates in bounteous plenty !

That not a dollar she may lack
To make replete her secret coffers,
For this we all are welcomed back ;
The treasurer now awaits your offers.

SIGMA INITIATION PSI U

1894

I MET a most engaging boy,
Who told me that the Sigma soon
Would hold her annual pomp and joy,
And would I please to write a tune?

"We do not care if it *is* short,"
He said, "if full of fun and wit,
But have it of that spicy sort
To spur the freshmen up a bit."

I eyed him with my coal black eye,
Erroneously described as blue,
And said, "Perhaps that I would try
To sing a song for Old Psi U."

But when for thirty years or more
One twangs upon a single string,
Some hearers vote he is a bore
How e'er delightfully he sing.

But never mind ; when Hazard asks
We all must tremble and obey,
Assuming most unusual tasks,
Like this which I take up to-day.

Perhaps I should my work begin
By counseling each tender lad
To shun the road that leads to sin,
And never, *never*, to be bad ;

To note the ways their fathers walk,
In paths of virtue, don't you see ?
And let their sweet and youthful talk
Be ever in " Epitome."

Commit that little book to heart,
Write compositions now and then,
In short, be ready for each part
Assigned you by the older men.

Do always what the Seniors say —
Avoid the girls — we always did ;
They have a most insidious way,
And may delude you — Lord forbid !

By turns sweep off the lodge-room floor,
Remove from every chair the dust,

Stand wardens at the outer door,
And feed the goat ; indeed, you must.

There may be other points, perhaps,
That in my haste I fail to tell,
But if you heed the other chaps
You 're nearly sure to come out well.

Be loyal to our banner true,
Unsullied wear the diamond pin,
Aye, love our mother, Old Psi U,
And for her sake new honors win.

Thus, after thirty years, maybe,
Some single man, or chosen few,
May stand, with whitened hair like me,
And say, like me, God bless Psi U !

Read at

The Initiation of the Sigma of Psi U, October 19, 1894

IS this Psi U? It cannot be!
It does not seem the place at all,
Although I hear the sounds of glee
Re-echo in this mystic hall.

The boys I knew, Oh! where are they?
I see them in perspective glance,
But some are gone, and some are gray,
And others known to fame, perchance.

Yet though we all are changed, perhaps,
I see them in their former guise,
And greetings from those jolly chaps
Would not at all my mood surprise.

For Sigma men are never old
However fate may with them deal,
They wear the diamond pin of gold,
The mystic grasp responsive feel.

And in the new hall, as of yore,
They gather on this festive night,
To sing the ancient songs once more,
And set some little freshman right.

A boy myself, I cannot deem
That I am otherwise than they,
Psi U is still my spirit's dream,—
I joined her only yesterday.

A P S I U E N I G M A

WHEN from his home on fair Grenada's hills,
Boabdil, exiled, fled his native land,
Lamenting vainly all his country's ills,
My First he wafted to the distant strand.

My First the maids of Judah knew full well,
Who hung their silent harps on Babel's shore,
And wept to think that they were asked to tell
The holy words they loved in days of yore.

Armed with my Second, English yoemen stood,
In brave array, on Crecy's battled field,
It was the pride of merry Robin Hood,
And better known than ever spear or shield.

My Second, as most grammars seem to teach,
Is plural, but in idiomatic use
By Quakers is eschewed in forms of speech,
And subject then to most absurd abuse.

My Whole, a daughter of our Union fair,
To thee, her sons, full well is known to fame,
Aloft she stands, a Queen beyond compare,—
Let every Brother shout her glorious name!

— 1902

Poem read at

The dinner given at the Hotel Savoy, New York,
January 24, 1896, by the Psi Upsilon Fraternity to
Judge Francis N. Finch upon his retirement from
the Court of Appeals of the State of New York

SWEET Singer ! by whose tender touch
Cemented were the Blue and Gray,
We hail thee, for we love thee much,
And welcome thee, our guest to-day.

The righteous judge, his record scan,
No blemish there we all agree,
" The grand old name of gentleman "
He wears for all the world to see.

But oft aside the robe he throws
In restful hours to win the muse,
And from his pen the rhythm flows
To glad the hearts of all Psi U's

In varying moods, now gay, now grave,
His dulcet harp he plays upon,

And gives us many a ringing stave
In honor of Psi Upsilon.

I give you then "Our Noble Guest!"
Fill high your glasses to the brim,
The poet of Psi U confessed —
We love, we praise, we honor him!

O MOTHER, DEAR, PSI UPSILON

Read for the author at the Annual Dinner of the Psi
Upsilon Association of New England,
January 19, 1906

(To the tune of Mother, dear, Jerusalem)

O MOTHER, dear, Psi Upsilon,
How grandly thou hast grown !
And every Brother here is one,
And we, and they, thine own.
With all thy youthful sons alert,
Whose loyalty is shown
By many a gladsome, ringing shout,
Till each long night is flown.

O Mother, dear, Psi Upsilon,
Once more we come to thee,
From North, from South, from East
And West, from over land and sea.
We bring our treasures to thy feet,
Our children to thy knee,
Each Brother by the hand we greet
In love and loyalty.

Then Mother, dear, Psi Upsilon,
Sweet as thy memories be,
We come again unto thy shrine,
And here renew to thee
The pledge we made in youthful days
When life was gladness all,
We chant our loudest hymn of praise,
Responsive to thy call !

SIGMA INITIATION, 1903

TORN are the chords, unstrung the harp,
That once through Sigma stormed and thundered,
But I, who know each flat and sharp,
Can hardly say that I have wondered.

Two score and two's a lengthy time—
Be witness every loyal Brother—
In which "to build the lofty rhyme"
In praise of her, Our Good Old Mother!

Though Paganini's self had tuned
For me each instrumental number,
By this time I had surely swooned,
Or sunk in everlasting slumber.

Were Sigma not a mighty theme
For individual or for nation,
Enough to fire a poet's dream,
Or e'en old Wagner's inspiration.

Enough for me the diamond bright
On which are 'graved the symbols golden,
I ever view them with delight,
To them are lastingly beholden.

For simple truth they ever stand,
Our motto's charm aye underlying,
The sacred secrets of a band
Whose noble purpose is undying.

So, when a summons comes each year
To sing my song in praise of Sigma,
I sieze my harp without a fear,
Nor dread the task as an enigma.

For boys, despite rheumatic age,
A youthful spirit ever lingers,
And turning to our fateful page
New hope inspires my trembling fingers.

I once again old times renew,
To hail each rosy, new-born Brother,
To shout again for Old Psi U,
Our Pride, Our Faith, Our Good Old Mother!

FOR SIGMA SMOKER

1904

LONG years ago, when Greece was young,
And college songs were still unsung,
Old Cadmus, or some other man,
Contrived a most peculiar plan
More erudition still to get,
And called his work an alphabet.
It proves, although he was a Cad,
He wasn't altogether mad,
"He builded better than he knew,"
For thence arose our loved Psi U.

Still, not indeed for many ages,
The turning of three thousand pages,—
Did it occur to Union's sons
To call themselves "Psi Upsilon."
We all here profit by the act,
Resulting from that glorious fact.
One single letter Cadmus made
That puts all others in the shade.
He showed himself full well alive,

Our crooked Sigma to contrive,
For seeing zig-zag lightning flash,
His style he caught, and with a dash,
On fair papyrus promptly hurled
The symbol which astounds the world !
Then, as he gazed Time's path adown
He said, "This letter stands for Brown."
He meant that noble little band,
The proudest in our Yankee land,
That doth present our own Psi U,
The Sigma, ever brave and true !

AT SIGMA INITIATION

October, 1895

I THINK my brothers, one and all,
The classic legend will recall,
How once the fair Eurydice
In Hades did her weird dree,
For many years, till Orpheus' voice
Did cause her spirit to rejoice.
They also will remember well
What afterwards to her befell ;
How following him, entranced but mute,
Enraptured by his dulcet lute,
She nearly reached the upper air,
When Orpheus ceased to have due care,
And she "went back on him," you know,
Retreating to the realms of woe.

Now, while I cannot justly say
In Hades I abide to-day,
I hope to draw a parallel
Between me and the Queen of Hell.

Each year some sweet-voiced Sigma man
Just buncoes me on Orpheus' plan,
And coaxes me until I say
I'll follow him the upward way,
And leaves me at the moment when
I pass the dog that guards the den
And tells me, as the gate confines
The Sigma wants my annual lines.

My hair and verse are growing thin,
But while I wear the diamond pin,
And sport the claspèd hands of gold,
I always do what I am told.
Of years I've done it thirty-five,
But still I'm here and much alive,
Each year inveigled by the noise,
To rank myself among the boys,
And shout the good old songs once more
I warbled in the days of yore.
As champs the war-horse for the fray,
I seek this fair October day,
When Sigma, most prolific lass,
All former efforts doth surpass,
And, in the presence of her sons,
Gives birth to new Psi Upsilon.
'Tis always an inspiring theme,
And so I fondly sometimes dream

When this, my lyre, has ceased to twang,
In Sigma's hall it still shall hang,
And Brothers, as they pass it by,
Will gaze with a triumphant eye.
Say, "Bailey's harp! He used to try
To keep the Sigma's tail on high!"

SIGMA INITIATION

1905

OLD Marcus Tullius wrote, 'tis true,
A book of very many pages,
In which he told us all he knew
Or thought, concerning what old age is.

In many aspects he was right ;
He had full plenteous bread and honey,
And never knew, as we know, quite
The pinch that comes from lack of money.

The twinges of lumbago ne'er
He mentions, as his frame assailing,
Sciatica he did not bear,
Or else we'd heard him loudly wailing.

Nor did he know, great pain of all,
The danger of in youth assuming
To write in verse, but later fall
That follows on too much presuming.

He never was in old Psi U
Or many things he'd known much better,
And written them for me and you,
In form of a paternal letter.

He toyed not with the muse, 'tis thought,
Presiding over harps and zithers,
So to his mind was rarely brought
The question which completely withers:—

What shall I write? What shall I sing
To please a group of jolly fellows?
What offering to the shrine may bring
Which may perhaps suppress their bellows?

'Twas easy for old Tully, too,
To scribble fast, "*De Senectute*,"
He kenned not of our proud Psi U,
And reck'd not much of love and duty.

He did, though, write of friendship's ties
And prefixed then a mighty D'am—
At which his friends felt keen surprise,
While he said, "What a fool I am!"

I feel a good deal in his plight,
To tune my harp for goodly cheering,
So, Brothers, I will say Good-night!
For much my critics I am fearing.

And stunts from every Freshman lad
Who has not been too far dissected,
We hope to hear, both good and bad,
As they, by chance, may be directed.

One only duty, it is true,
Remains for me, and nothing other,
To sound a toast for old Psi U,
And call a blessing on our Mother!

MR. TALBOT'S FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On April 6th, 1907, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. R. Talbot celebrated Mr. Talbot's entry upon his second half century of Psi U membership. He is of the Lambda Chapter of Columbia University, and one of the most faithful attendants at meetings of the Sigma. These lines were penned at his request

THIS is a festal occasion,
Once more does the star of Psi Upsilon
Beam on the blushing young Talbot,
'Tis a tale of the Eastern romancer,
He tells of his fiftieth cycle,
Of how, on his carpet, he travelled
To lands of the Peri and Genie.
Why, look, how at every re-union,
He comes to review the initiates!
'Tis we who are old, not our Talbot,
He blooms in perennial juvenescence,
Think of the many fine fellows
He has seen admitted to Sigma!
For long ere we note or remember,

He became part of our record,
Descended to us by tradition,
Like Waterman, Rogers, and Diman,
Like Harkness, Dunn and Dan Beckwith,
Lippitt, De Mille, and Ned Blanchard !
He, who was born of the Lambda,
Fondled and nurtured by Sigma,
He came, as we say, by tradition,
As does our grip and our motto,
Too sacred for public expression,
Not to be mentioned unheeding :—
Always with reverent obeisance !
Grew up with yonder rare trophies,
Grew with Columbian vigor.
Then, on a day unrecorded,
He threw in his lot with the Sigma,
And since has been one of our Brothers,
Now, were it not for our Talbot,
We would have to abandon the Chapter,
Nor rain, nor storm can detain him ;
No duty prevent his appearing
When Sigma has met for a session,
A function or solemn occasion,
A dance, or play by the Freshmen,
A smoker or similar festival.
Then, too, with friendliness beaming
He opens his house to the Sigma,

Spreads a rare feast for the Brothers,
Served by Psi Upsilon ladies,
Lovely, and gentle, and kindly,
Such as we toast on occasion,
Wear in our hearts, and give pins to!

Long life then to good Brother Talbot!
Health to his wife and his daughters!
Fifty years more to his record!
In which, each recurring November,
Shall we see him again at the Sigma,
Younger than trembling initiates,
Youngest, indeed, of the Brothers!

THE FLAG OF PSI U

Read at the banquet of the 74th Annual Convention of the Psi Upsilon Fraternity, held with the Delta of the University of New York, April 12, 1907, in the large dining-room of Hotel Waldrof Astoria, New York. About five hundred brothers present.

HERE is the flag of Psi U
Brilliant, and spotless, and new,
Garnet and yellow in hue,
Clasped hands in gold thereupon,
And letters, Psi Upsilon,
Written above and below,
Symbols that all of us know
Beloved Psi Upsilon !

Long may these letters stand
For all that is good in the land,
Known to our brave little band ;
To this, our own jolly crew,
Let us our efforts renew !

May we each Chapter sustain !
Give them three cheers again !
Hurrah, Hurrah for Psi U !

Fling out the garnet and gold !
Guarded by Brothers so bold !
Sign of a treasure untold,
Let it fly wide to the breeze !
Waving o'er lands and o'er seas !
Nail our brave flag to the mast !
May all its victories last !
Once more to the Flag of Psi U !

INITIATION AT SIGMA

1899

I TAKE down my harp from the peg where 'tis
hanging —

The harp that old Chronos doth roughly abuse,
To see, if once more I can set its chords twanging,
In praise of old Sigma and all the Psi Us.

For thirty-nine years it is annually playing
A tune which essentially bideth the same,
My fingers are lovingly over it straying,
And striving once more its wild notes to reclaim.

The music's still in it, I know by the feeling,
Melodious chords I never yet sung;
I hear as brave symphonies over me stealing
As those which at former festivities rung.

But how catch the tune that forever is fleeting?
The pæan that fitly gives praise to Psi U?
What words can I give at this annual meeting?
I surely would chant them if ever I knew.

The clasped hands of gold on our diamond shining,
Are surely a text for a poet or seer;
Those mystical letters forever entwining,
Remain for each Brother perpetually dear.

Then, sweet little Freshmen, each wonderful Brother,
I hope you will utter your tenderest lay,
Will keep in your mind, dear Old Sigma, Our Mother,
And bring her new honors for many a day!

SIGMA INITIATION

1907

WHEN Judah's maidens sat adown and wept,
By Babylon's streams where hung their harps
unswept,
They pleaded loud, "they could not understand;
How sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?
How dare the once-loved music to essay
Or by these distant rivers seek to play?"
So have I found it ever seem a task,
When far from home, a stranger youth doth ask
That I shall chant, in words however few,
To other Chapters, songs of Old Psi U.
My heart for Sigma ever is so full,
On other themes, alas! I have no pull,
Not e'en the old Fraternity at large
Can launch with safety my reluctant barge.
Its sails refuse to catch the wind and fill;
In other words, I cannot write at will.
'Tis only when Old Sigma's "tail" demands,
My zither answers to my palsied hands.

But, Brothers, even then, is it quite fair
To call an ancient from the patriarch's chair,
Which he for forty-seven years has filled,
And ask for nectar many times distilled?
In life's alembic stirred about so much,
That only dregs respond unto his touch?
(My metaphors are sadly mixed, I fear,
Let no one stand for good old Rhetoric here,
Since once it throve beneath Professor Dunn,
A favorite child of old Psi Upsilon,
You'll find his portrait hung in yonder room,
His smile pervasive as a rich perfume,
Recalling phrases ever sweet and mild,
Drawn from the "well of English undefiled)."
Shall I forever answer to your call,
Whenever summoned to this ancient hall?
Cannot some understudy get at once in train
For that quick time when you shall call in vain?

* * * * *

Not any fellow in the crowd can dodge
When he's commanded in this sacred lodge.
Don't go so often to the same old well,
Lest it should lose its potency and spell.

Well, now I'm up, as politicians say,
I'm up for good, and mean awhile to stay,
Like brave McMahan, in the gloomy days

Of Third Republic's very devious ways.
At least I'll answer in a word or two
To what I'm called for, Sigma and Psi U,
The mother and the daughter ever fair,
In all experience far beyond compare.
Stick to them both, ye Brothers, old and young,
Sing ye the songs we ancients always sung,
Fill ye your glasses to our banner bold,
The glorious colors, garnet and old gold !
If ye but stick to harmless lemonade
Don't fear that you'll mistake a sable spade
For other cards of some atrocious hue,
Though all are trumps we hold here in Psi U.

Now in most proper terms, expressions bright,
Respond as fitting, to each toast to-night,
Long live the Sigma ! God bless old Psi U !
May every year her record proud renew,
Let courage fill the soul of every man,
That he may keep her motto and her plan,
And, as old Catlin says, who's ever knowin',
Hold to her fast, aye, "keep her still agoin' !"

SIGMA INITIATION

1900

WHERE is that cup of ruby wine
We used to quaff in Auld Lang Syne
When toasting here the "Dear Old Shrine?"

Will not some brother lead a raid
For liquids of superior grade
To cold and feeble lemonade?

I note in Brother Gardner's e'e,
He fully doth accord with me,
And that fair chalice longs to see.

He has, indeed, implied a doubt
If such a cup was e'er about,
As used to bring the old-time shout.

Sweet cynic, I assure you here,
Although you deem it passing queer,
That cup existed many a year,

And may, indeed, be still on earth ;
No subject for unseemly mirth ;
A treasure still of passing worth.

Who knows but Gardner next will carp
About old Bailey's well-strung harp,
And other things considered sharp ?

No matter, there is such a lyre,
" Still pregnant with celestial fire,"
To hurl on foes invectives dire.

He might as well, one would suppose,
Think Ham was dead, when each one knows,
His Irish gent's but in repose.

Anon, when yonder cup is found,
And with the ruby drop goes round,
We'll hear of Noah, I'll be bound.

But not at such a time as this
May I strike any chord amiss,
Or interrupt such perfect bliss.

The hour belongs to Old Psi U,
And if I tell her nothing new,
My utterance shall, at least, be true.

To each and all, both Pa and Son,
I wish an evening full of fun,
Forever live Psi Upsilon!

